



Glendale Fire Department
Office of the Fire Chief



Memo

Date: May 18, 2016
To: Honorable Mayor and Council
Through: Kevin Phelps, City Manager
From: Terry Garrison, Fire Chief
Subject: Response to Council Item of Special Interest – High School Fireworks Surcharge

As a Council Item of Special Interest on May 17, 2016, Councilmember Tolmachoff and Councilmember Hugh requested staff to research the High School Fireworks Surcharge.

The Fire Prevention Office has made many efforts to accommodate schools and assess reasonable fees for school related functions. As an advocate for reduced or no cost permits for K-12 school activities, and in support of these functions, we issue no-cost permits for graduations and other similar activities held off school property (such as graduations at the University of Phoenix Stadium). This is possible as long as the function does not include any activity that would require a fire inspector be present during the event. We believe this decision is within the fire department's discretion as the current adopted community development fee schedule does not include a permit specific for graduation ceremonies. However, when activities include fireworks or pyrotechnics we must be present and therefore are obligated to recover these expenses.

The community development fee schedule includes both fireworks and pyrotechnic permits.

- The current fee to conduct a pyrotechnic special effect is \$902.57. This can be found in the council adopted community development fee schedule on page 31
- Historically, homecoming pyrotechnic activities have been assessed the "Minimum plan review when none of the above apply" rate of \$300.80 (\$150.40 @ 2hr minimum). This was based on a decision to apply a fee that is reasonable in relation to the "level" of activity.

these fees are in addition to the application fee of \$44.78

With the many changes over the past few years, as well as other dynamics such as financial/budgetary concerns, and audit reporting, we have been reminded that permitting and fee assessment as outlined in the community development fee schedule is vital. We believe we are applying all community development fees appropriately; however, the method we use to charge for pyrotechnic activities during homecoming

games fall into a grey area. Schools are, in fact, conducting pyrotechnic special effect activities, but at an extremely limited and low scale. Unfortunately, the current fee schedule does not take this into consideration. A full pyrotechnic special effect show at a concert is more in line with what this fee was intended. At homecoming games, pyrotechnics “typically concussion shots and minimal fireworks” are used primarily when a touchdown occurs.

While the pyrotechnic permit rate is applicable to homecoming activities, it is our opinion that the resources we use to plan review and issue permits for homecoming games is minimal, and assessing the minimum plan review rate as described above is a reasonable alternative. As this topic is of concern to our customer and of interest to city leadership, we are planning to assess the lower rate of \$300.80 (plus application fees) for this homecoming season while we work toward a more permanent resolution.

The on-going maintenance and updates to the community development fee schedule fall within the purview of the Building Department; however, as users, we stand willing and ready to participate in reviewing and revamping all necessary fees. During the next community development fee schedule review and update, we could add additional fees to the pyrotechnic category to address these types of low scale, low risk activities. For example, and using our work-load study, the cost would be approximately \$214.52 plus application fees. That said, we would recommend a complete review/revamp of fire department fees contained within the community development fee schedule to ensure all rates are based on the cost recovery model used during the 2012 study.